

Research & Reference Room
National Archives of India

Research Room- An Introduction

The National Archives of India has the distinction of being the custodian of public records significant not only for our country but also for many others in the subcontinent. Established as the Imperial Record Department in 1891 in Calcutta, the Department was shifted to the new Capital along with all other government departments. From its origin in a humble building, it acquired pride of place in the new capital. The Imperial Record Department was renamed as the National Archives of India after Independence

All records generated in various Ministries/ Departments and evaluated to be of permanent value are transferred to the National Archives of India (NAI). The continuous series of records date back to the middle of 18th century (1748) and the process of acquiring documents from the public offices is an ongoing process with the bulk increasing every year. If the records are arranged in a linear pattern, it would cover approximately 40 km of shelf space comprising 38,75,332 files , 64,221 volumes, 1,065 Treaties, 3,601 Bills assented to by the President(s) of India, 1,10,332 maps and cartographic items and 2,442 rare manuscripts . All records transferred to the NAI are arranged as per internationally accepted archival practices. They are kept here in trust by the creating agencies to be used by them or by such persons authorized under the archival legislation. The guidelines for accessing records in the custody of NAI have been laid down under Public Records Rules, 1997.

Access Rules:

Records in the custody of the NAI are available for consultation by research scholars. As per Public Records Rules, 1997, Indian nationals have to submit a letter of introduction from their sponsoring University/ Institution. In case of Indian nationals searching for records in their individual capacity, the Director General may grant permission on submission of an Identity proof.

Foreign nationals have to submit a letter of introduction from their sponsoring University/ Institution as well as a letter of introduction from their diplomatic mission in India. Request of Foreign nationals conducting research in their individual capacity may be considered on endorsement of the same in the letter from their diplomatic mission. PIO/ OCI card holders are required to submit documents as required by foreign nationals.

Timings:

The Research Room remains open from 9.00 AM - 8.00 PM on weekdays (Monday – Friday) and from 9.00 AM -5.30 PM on Saturdays and other Government holidays. Library, Oriental Records Division and Private Archives do not function on Saturdays and other holidays.

Holidays:

The NAI remains closed on 26 January (Republic Day), 15 August (Independence Day), 2 October (Gandhi Jayanti) and also on Holi.

Process of Accessing Records:

Registration: Researchers have to fill up a registration form (Form 8, Public Records Rules, 1997) and submit the documents required under rules (mentioned in Access Rules above).

Finding-Aids:

The NAI has a variety of finding-aids ranging from Macro reference media like **Guides** to Micro reference media like **Indices**. **Guides** may be used to understand the various record holdings, the bulk of each of the series, inclusive years, and some significant documents. For specific references to records **Indices**, Subject lists, Descriptive Lists or Transfer Lists may be consulted. The Research Room also has some dedicated computer terminals for conducting an electronic search using AIMS (Archival Information Management System) package.

Requisition Process:

The records identified through various finding-aids may be requisitioned using the Requisition slips available in the Research Room. Separate requisitions are to be filled up for each reference.

Requisition Timings:

Researchers can requisition up to 30 documents on a working day at three specific timings. Ten requisitions each are forwarded to the concerned Repositories at 10.00 AM, 12.30 PM and 3.00 PM. Not more than ten requisitions are accepted at each of these timings. An extra lot of ten requisitions would be forwarded at 4.00 PM if the research scholar has returned up to ten files issued in a day.

Expected Time of Records Requisitioned:

The records requisitioned at each of the three timings mentioned above would be supplied within two and a half hours. All requisitions forwarded are supplied the same day.

Reserving Documents:

The records are issued to the research scholars for a period of seven working days. Unfinished records may be reserved in designated space within the Research Room.

Duplication:

Duplication of the documents in the form of Plain Paper Copies, Microfilms, Scanned images are provided on payment basis. Schedule of prevalent rates may be checked in the Website or on the Notice Board of the Research Room.

Condition for Copying:

Documents likely to be damaged while copying will not be copied. The copies of documents are not to be transferred to another person/ institution without obtaining the prior permission of the NAI.

Accessing 'Restricted/ Closed' Category Records:

This requires clearance from the concerned Ministries.

Other Records:

In addition to the Public Records, NAI also has a significant number of Private Archives, Oriental Records and Published material which may be consulted in their respective sections on submission of an Introductory-Slip from the Research Room. The introductory-slips would be provided on completion of enrolment procedures.

Handling of Records:

Utmost care may be taken in handling the records. Use of pencils for taking notes instead of pens would be highly appreciated. The documents are not to be folded, pinned or taped. Use of adhesive slips to mark the pages is not permitted. Worn out pages may be immediately brought to the notice of the staff of Research Room. Use of cameras, digital cameras, hand-held scanners is strictly prohibited. Eatables/ water/ beverages may not be brought inside the Research Room.

Lockers for Personal Belongings:

Researchers have to keep their personal belongings in the lockers.

Instructions for Scholars:

Researchers are requested to browse the 'Instructions for Research Scholars' exhibited in the Research Room.

Acknowledgement:

Publications based on records have to acknowledge and send a copy of the publication to the NAI Library.

Attendance Register:

All research scholars are to sign in the Attendance Register at the entrance of Research Room on their visit.

Visitors' Book:

Researchers may note their suggestions/ opinion on the services being provided in the Visitors' Book kept at the entrance. Your suggestions would help in improving our services.

Search on Payment Basis:

We prefer researchers coming in person to the NAI but in case due to distance/ age we undertake search on their behalf on payment of nominal fee of Rs 125/- per day for a maximum of ten days.

Request for copy of Records by Post:

In case researchers want to copy documents, we undertake the work on fulfillment of requisite formalities (Refer to Form 9)

Scholars' Lounge:

Scholars wishing to take a break can use the Scholars' Lounge adjacent to the Research Room. Beverages and light refreshments are available.

Contact Details:

Research Room – 011-23073462

Reprography -011-23382475

Library -011-23073007

Private Archives –011-23074797

Oriental Records – 011-23073010

Cartography – 011-23070293